

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 HAVANA 02692 071835Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 HA-05  
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O 071730Z SEP 78  
FM USINT HAVANA  
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EO 11652: NA  
TAGS: PDEV SOPN PINT CU  
SUBJ: FIDEL CASTRO'S PRESS CONFERENCE WITH CUBAN-AMERICAN  
JOURNALISTS

FIDEL CASTRO GAVE PRESS CONFERENCE LATE SEPTEMBER 6 TO  
APPROXIMATELY 25 CUBAN-AMERICAN AND U.S. NETWORK AND WIRE  
SERVICE MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES (PRESS, RADIO, TV).  
CONFERENCE WILL BE CARRIED ON LOCAL TV THIS EVENING, AND  
WE WILL REPORT ANY ADDITIONAL ITEMS AND COMMENTS AFTER  
OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW IT OURSELVES. FOLLOWING HIGHLIGHTS  
EMERGED FROM USINT DEBRIEFING THIS MORNING OF TWO  
JOURNALISTS (BILL LONG AND YOUNGER GUILLERMO MARTINEZ,  
BOTH MIAMI HERALD) WHO ATTENDED CONFERENCE:  
A. CASTRO DECLARED THAT NO FURTHER PROGRESS IN  
RELATIONS WITH U.S. IS POSSIBLE UNTIL EMBARGO IS COMPLETELY  
LIFTED.

B. HE STATED THAT DEVELOPMENTS (INCLUDING RECENT  
CONTACTS WITH EXILE GROUPS LIKE ANTONIO MACEO  
BRIGADE AND OTHERS) HAVE ENCOURAGED HIM TO BELIEVE THAT  
THERE HAS BEEN A REDUCTION OF HOSTILITY TOWARD THE  
CUBAN REVOLUTION AMONG EXILES ABROAD. AT THE SAME TIME  
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CASTRO HAS COME TO APPRECIATE MORE FULLY THE CONCERNS  
OF THOSE EXILES. SINCE THE REVOLUTION ITSELF IS SECURE,  
CASTRO SAID THAT HE WOULD THEREFORE WELCOME INCREASED  
CONTACTS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EXILES (OTHER THAN  
TERRORISTS) TO SEEK SOLUTIONS TO THOSE PROBLEMS. ASIDE  
FROM THE ANTONIO MACEO BRIGADE, CASTRO MENTIONED  
REVEREND ESPINOZA, ROSENDO CANTO HERNANDEZ (ORGANIZER

OF A REUNIFICATION GROUP IN SPAIN) AND THE CASA DE LAS AMERICAS IN NEW YORK AS EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE EXILE REPRESENTATIVES FOR THESE CONTACTS.

C. CASTRO IMPLIED THAT RECENT ACTION TO PERMIT DEPARTURE OF DUAL NATIONALS AND CUBAN POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE GESTURES TO CUBAN EXILES (RATHER THAN USG). HE SAID THEY WERE NOT RESPONSES TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM. HE SUGGESTED THAT FURTHER ACTIONS IN THIS FIELD, INCLUDING FAMILY VISITATION RIGHTS, ARE AMONG TOPICS WHICH COULD BE DISCUSSED IN FUTURE WITH CUBAN EXILES, AND SAID THAT USG WOULD HAVE NO ROLE OTHER THAN TO GRANT ENTRY PERMISSION.

D. CASTRO EMPHASIZED THAT HE HAS NOT APPROVED A GENERAL AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS (HE ADMITTED THAT THERE ARE SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 3,000 STILL IN JAIL). NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID THAT RELEASE OF ALL THESE PRISONERS PLUS FORMER POLITICAL PRISONERS WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN FREED (HE GAVE FIGURE OF 15,000) COULD BE DISCUSSED SINCE SOME OF THESE PEOPLE (PERHAPS 25 PERCENT) HAVE NOT BEEN FULLY INTEGRATED INTO CUBA'S REVOLUTIONARY SOCIETY. HE GAVE NO COMMITMENTS, HOWEVER.

E. CASTRO INDICATED THAT HE WAS DISTRESSED BY USG DECISION TO ANNOUNCE THE PRISONER RELEASE PROGRAM IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WASHINGTON, AND ESPECIALLY BY COMMENTS BY U.S. SPOKESMEN THAT PRISONERS WOULD BE SCREENED TO KEEP OUT "SPIES". WHILE REFUSING TO NAME THE PRISONERS ON THE LIST ALREADY PROVIDED TO U.S., HE IMPLIED CLEARLY THAT ANTONIO CUESTA IS INCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE UNDERSTANDS CUESTA CANNOT GET U.S. ENTRY PERMISSION. CASTRO SAID HUBER MATOS IS NOT ON FIRST LIST BUT IS NOT EXCLUDED FROM FUTURE CONSIDERATION.

F. ON OTHER MATTERS, CASTRO DID NOT BUDGE IN HIS REAFFIRMATION OF CUBA'S AFRICAN POLICY. COMPENSATION AND PUERTO RICO ISSUES APPARENTLY DID NOT COME UP, EXCEPT THAT CASTRO AGAIN DENIED ANY SUPPORT FOR PUERTO RICAN TERRORISTS. HE ALSO SOUGHT TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT CUBA HAS NOT SUPPORTED SANDINISTAS BY SAYING THAT THEY DO NOT NEED CUBA'S SUPPORT AND THIS IS AN INTERNAL NICARAGUAN AFFAIR.

G. AS REFLECTION OF HIS NEW ATTITUDE OF OPENNESS TOWARD CUBAN EXILES, CASTRO SAID THEY SHOULD NO LONGER BE CALLED GUSANOS (WORMS), BUT RATHER THE "CUBAN COMMUNITY ABROAD".

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS CONFERENCES, JOURNALISTS  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**TAGS:** PDEV, SOPN, PINT, CU, (CASTRO, FIDEL)  
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